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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated a partial-immersion program in French in Victoria, Australia, an area in which little research has been conducted to date. The program has operated at an elementary school since 1991 and is the first English/French program of its kind in Victoria. French is the language of instruction for at least 40 percent of classes, with mathematics, physical education, and art taught in French. The present study focused on the interlanguage development of the students in years one through four, drawing on data from a storytelling exercise, cloze tests for the older children, analysis of student writing samples, and think-aloud protocols and classroom observation. Developmental error patterns, English narrative development, and accent are considered. Findings are reported and implications for program policy in this context are discussed briefly. Contains 10 references. (MSE)

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Issues in Australian immersion research

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Abstract

Immersion programs, and by extension, immersion research, are comparatively recent phenomena in Australia, and are still viewed with some trepidation by parents. As a result, much of the research to date into such programs has involved quantitative evaluations of outcomes. The expansion of content-based programs, especially early partial immersion programs, is currently being encouraged by many education administrations. However, the research base on which this enthusiasm is founded is limited, especially with regard to data on the processes of children's language development in first and second languages in such programs.

Since late 1994 we have been engaged in an evaluation of one such program, where we have collected much data on all aspects of the children's progress in the program. The paradigm for analysis and reporting of the large amount of qualitative data we have collected has had to be reconciled with that for the analysis and reporting of the statistical data obtained from testing. In this paper I will discuss some of the insights into the children's language development we have been able to obtain through the use of a diversity of research tools and approaches - including interviews, story telling sessions, think aloud protocols, spontaneous narratives and content tests. On the basis of what we have found, how transferable are our results to other programs, and what implications are there for the programs just beginning? What have we learned about the process of language learning in early partial immersion programs in Australia?

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Issues in Australian immersion research

Introduction

Immersion programs, and by extension, immersion research, are comparatively recent phenomena in Australia, and are still viewed with some trepidation by parents. As a result, much of the research to date into such programs has involved quantitative evaluations of outcomes. The expansion of content-based programs, especially early partial immersion programs, is currently being encouraged by many education administrations. However, the research base on which this enthusiasm is founded is limited, especially with regard to data on the processes of children's language development in first and second languages in such programs.

The program I will be discussing in this presentation has been running at a primary school in Melbourne, Australia, since 1991 and is the first English/French program of its kind in Victoria. French is the language of instruction for at least 40% of classes, with mathematics, physical education and art taught in French.

In late 1994, the Principal of the school asked the University of Melbourne to undertake a professional evaluation of the School's French/English early partial immersion program. With the program about to enter its fifth year, the School wished to evaluate the students' progress in the French language and in mathematics, the main content subject. The evaluation was especially desirable since some parents had voiced concerns that their children's proficiency in mathematics might be impeded by the fact that they were learning the subject in French. At the same time, some parents were wondering whether their children should be introduced to reading and writing in French at an earlier stage in the course.

Since late 1994, I and my colleagues Monique Burston, Jane Warren from the Department of French and Italian Studies have been working on this evaluation, where we have collected much data on all aspects of the children's progress in the program.

For our evaluation, we have been guided by the principles espoused by Guba and Lincoln (1991) and Lynch (1996), that is, that:

> The failure to use evaluation findings .... illustrates the poverty of traditional evaluations, which are likely to fail precisely because they do not begin with the

> concerns and issues of their actual audiences and because they produce information that, while perhaps statistically significant, does not generate truly worthwhile knowledge. (Guba and Lincoln, 1991, p. ix)

The paradigm for analysis and reporting of the large amount of qualitative data we have collected has had to be reconciled with that for the analysis and reporting of the statistical data obtained from testing. Guba and Lincoln (1991, p. 77) argue strongly that "the naturalistic paradigm should be the paradigm of choice" for those undertaking evaluations of educational programs. This was especially so in our case, as the school would not allow us to establish a control group of children in another school, against whom our results could be compared. However, Guba & Lincoln note that:

> There is no reason why both camps should not exploit both quantitative and qualitative techniques, should not be concerned with both relevance and rigor, should not be open to empirically grounded theory as well as to flashes of insight from conceptual leaders in the field, should not be interested in verification and discovery, and so on."

Today I will be reporting on the data on interlanguage development obtained by using a story telling exercise, using a picture story book for the younger children and reading aloud for Years 3 and 4 and cloze tests in French to gauge reading and writing skills in Years 3 and 4.

As well, one of my graduate students, Melissa Hiam conducted the research for her thesis with the Camberwell children. Melissa in 1996 assessed the development of the narrative genre in spoken English of children who were in the first three years.

Along with the interview testing, we also have been collecting examples of students' written work, and these have also been analysed. Think aloud protocols and classroom observations have also been conducted.

In this paper, I will be discussing what we have found about the students' interlanguage at various stages of the program.

French language development - 1995

Test design

Towards the end of 1995, the French language development of children in the program was examined. Two tests were developed, an interview test and a cloze test, based on the kinds of language and the routines we observed being used in the classroom, and drawing on testing procedures used to evaluate other primary language programs in Melbourne (for example, Clyne's work on German (1986); work by Cairo and Elder on Italian (1990)). We were unable to use the OISE tests, as their level was too high for these early partial immersion studentse. Similarly, French as a Second Language type tests contained too much unfamiliar vocabulary. Therefore we had to develop our own tests and describe progress rather than obtain quantifiable data. These tests were trialed with a random sample of students from Prep to Year 4 (approx 8 students per grade). Unfortunately, I will only have time today to report on the interview tests conducted with the younger children (P-2).

There were several parts to the interview, but we have the richest data from the story telling sessions where, for Years P-2, we asked the children to tell a story in French using pictures from a wordless picture story book (Dick Bruna's "A story to tell" as the stimulus.

Preps, Year 1 and Year 2 story telling

The following sample of students was used to provide us with data on language development. The children were randomly sampled from each grade.

Preps (5 years old)	
P/1 girl	P/6 boy
P/2 girl	P/7 boy
P/3 girl	P/8 girl
P/4 boy	P/9 girl
P/5 girl	
Year 1 (6 years old)	
1/1 girl (French parent)	1/5 boy
1/2 girl	1/6 girl
1/3 boy	1/7 girl
1/4 girl	

Year 2 (7 years old)	
2/1 girl	2/6 girl
2/2 girl	2/7 boy
2/3 girl	2/8 boy
2/4 boy	2/9 girl
2/5 girl	2/10 boy
total: 17 girls, 9 boys	

NB more boys than this were selected for the sample, but were absent on the days when the interviews were conducted.

In the story telling, there is a clear progression across the grades in students' use of French, its complexity and correctness. Clyne (1986:58) presents four stages in the children's development from English to German in his study of German/English bilingual programs at primary level. We found these stages, adapted to the French/English situation at Camberwell, were useful to map this progression.

The tables on the overhead transparencies (see Appendix) show the amount of French our sample of students was able to produce. It will be clear from the data I will present later that even this amount of language was only possible with a great deal of scaffolding on the part of the interlocutor, and may have been strongly influenced by that scaffolding.

(the overhead slides used to illustrate this progression are reproduced in the Appendix.)

Clyne's four stages represented a starting point in our analysis. Next we had a detailed transcription made of all the stories, for which I am grateful to my research assistant, Jocelyn Tait. Some utterances could be clearly classified as belonging to a particular stage. For example, the Prep children were at stage 1, mainly using one- or two-word utterances in French with some responses in English, although two of the Prep children (P/3 and P/9) were more advanced, and their utterances were borderline between stages 3 and 4. In Year 1, the overall performance was quite varied, from one student (1/3) who, as you can see from the table, told nearly the whole story in English, to students 1/7 and 1/1 who again bordered on stage 4. In addition, some of the Year 2 students reached what we have called advanced stage 4.

It is clear that Clyne's stages of development require more refinement, as some utterances were difficult to classify. In particular, we found very few utterances that

corresponded to stage 2, where the matrix language is English with individual French words. The exception was child 1/3. In general, students seemed reluctant to mix the two languages. The number of stages also needs to be expanded: the students at Camberwell were more advanced even at Year 2 than children in Year 4 in the German bilingual programs that Clyne studied (1986). Here (see below) are illustrations of each stage. These are adapted to French from the descriptions found on pages 58-59 of Clyne (1986).

Stage 1 one- or two-word French sentences, formulaic responses, or no answer in French;

Stage 1

- (Question: 'Qu'est-ce que tu vois?') Un maison.
- (Question: 'Qu-est-ce que c'est?) Trois lapins.
- (Question: 'Dans le jardin qu'est-ce qu'il y a?') Six fleurs.

NB: All Prep students.

These extracts from the transcriptions of the story telling sessions illustrate even more clearly a child at this stage:

Extract 1

P/1:	solei::l,=
MB:	=oui, le soleil,
	(0.4)
P/1:	fleu::rs,
MB:	les fleurs, bie:n. (0.8) .hh e::t ça, c'est un petit garçon, c'est une petite fille. tu penses.
	(0.7)
P/1:	garçon=
MB:	=c'est un garçon. et pourquoi? (1.8) non. (0.5) tu penses que c'est un garçon. tu a raison. bie:n, c'est ça. et qu'est-ce qu'il fait? (2.0) qu'est-ce qu'il fait?
P/1:	euh
	(3.0)
MB:	*non*. tu peux- tu peux dire en anglais si tu veux. (0.6) qu'est-ce qu'il fait. (2.3). °non°. hh (>bien.<) il marche, il se promène. ≠O:H, ET MAINTENANT? (1.5) qu'est-ce que tu vois?
	(1.7)
P/1:	fleurs?=

Extract 2

P/2:	um
	(3.0)
MB:	°qu'est-ce que tu vois.° (1.0) hmm (2.2) .hh °ah qu'est-ce que c'est?° (2.5) °et ça- et ça qu'est-ce que c'est.° (2.6) °en anglais?°
	(1.2)
P/2:	flowers.=
MB:	=oui, des fleurs? des fleurs, oui. .hh e:t ça, c'est un garçon ou une fille.
	(0.5)
P/2:	un garçon
MB:	c'est un garçon. et qu'est-ce qu'il fait.
	(2.8)
P/2:	hh (2.6) he's walking.

Extract 3

JW:	qu'est-ce que tu vois.
	(4.0)
P/3:	frère
	(0.6)
JW:	okay, un petit- un petit garçon, oui. (0.3) et qu'est-ce qu'il fait.
	(3.0)
P/3:	.hh °°passe°°
	(0.6)
JW:	o:kay, il passe okay, c'est très bien, (.) et qu'est-ce que c'est ici. qu'est-ce qu'on voit ici.
	(0.7)
P/3:	le fleur.=
JW:	=les *fleu:rs*, et il y a combien de fleu:rs. °°est-ce qu'on peut les compter?°°
	(1.2)
P/3:	sept=

As you can see, the long silences from the children prompted the interviewers to ask very direct questions - what is it? what do you see? and so on. The children at this stage also did not seem to have an idea of telling the story, or narrative genre.

Stage 2 the matrix language is English, but individual French words are transferred;

Stage 2

• (Question: 'Qu'est-ce qu'il fait?') Walking... in... le jardin. (Year 1)

This extract from student 1/3's story telling session is the only example we had of a child not attempting to tell the story in French except for the occasional one word utterance:

Extract 4

MdC:	alors, qu'est-ce que tu vois ici.
	(3.5)
1/3:	a *bo:y*'s um (0.8) walking down the *path* with- uh and it's .hhh *mo:r*ni:ng,
MdC:	mhmm¿=
1/3:	=and um ((clears throat?)) there are some um .hh a:nd (0.2) she's looking at the flowers.=
MdC:	=oka:y, et ça, qu'est-ce que c'est.
	(0.6)
1/3:	°the sun.°
MdC:	okay, et il y a combien de fleu:rs que tu vois.
1/3:	(counting under breath un deux trois etc.) shall I count one behind. (pointing to child in picture)
	(1.2)
MdC:	O:H je ne sais pa:s hh
	((all laugh together))
	(3.5)
1/3:	sept.
MdC:	sept. .hh et peut être- (0.4) peut êtr'hui[t].

Stage 3 an attempt to speak French, with frequent code-switching to English within sentences;

Stage 3

• (Question: 'Qu'est-ce qu'elle fait?') Le femme est cooking. (Year 1)

• Il picked up le petit homme to la maison. (Year 2)

Here we see child 2/3 attempting to tell a story in French but needing help from the interlocutor:

Extract 5

2/3:	il (1.0) <picked up> ((seems to really resist mixing the languages))
MB:	ouais, il prend,
	(0.3)

2/3:	le: (.) petit homme, (0.6) to ((pron teu:)) (0.5) <la maison>.
MB:	d'acco:rd. pour aller dans sa maison. bie::n. .hh et qu'est-ce qu'ils font là. (2.0)
2/3:	ils jouent (2.8) de: (0.9) building (1.4) um: (0.3) building,

and later:

2/3:	il: um (7.6) i:l (9.5) il hh .hh
MB:	qu'est-ce que tu veux dire. en anglais. (0.7)
2/3:	made.
MB:	oh ils font, ils- ils ont f- ils font?=
2/3:	=ils font (3.5) leur- (2.0) d- din- (0.6) din- (0.4) dinner.=

Stage 4 the matrix language is clearly French, with occasional English words transferred, and sometimes integrated into the phonological/ grammatical system of French.

I would also add that frequent hesitations are found, and help is needed from the interlocutor to enable the child to produce "sentence-like" utterances:

Examples of utterances in emergent stage 4 are:

Emergent stage 4

- C'est un autre petit garçon. (Prep)
- Un petit personne qui pleure. (Prep)
- Le femme est regarder un... une petit gnome. (Year 1)
- Le petite clown met une grande building avec des blocs. (Year 2)

This first example from a Year 2 child is a clear illustration of stage 4:

Extract 6

MB:	d'accord, alors, (0.3) bien. raconte-moi l'histoire. (0.8)
2/1:	eeehh ((giggles)) un- (0.9) un (0.4) bonho:mme,=
MB:	=oui?
2/1:	.hhh hh hhhh (1.6) est [(sit-)] e:st (0.7) marcher,

MB:	[((laughs))]
MB:	oui?
	(4.0)
2/1:	hh uh (1.8) sur le: (1.7) fleurs,
MB:	jardin, d'accord bien, (0.8) oui c'est très [bien]
2/1:	[on] ((French pronunciation)) (1.6) le
	(0.8) summer (0.6) summeur's
MB:	ah oui,
	(1.0)
2/1:	day. (([dé]))

The utterance, without all the hesitations and scaffolding is:
"un bonhomme est marcher sur le fleurs on le summeur's day", all pronounced with a French accent.

The beginning of child 2/3's story could also be placed in this stage, though the language regressed to stage 3 as the story became more difficult:

Extract 7

2/3:	<*un* jour, un petit homme> (10.3) va: (5.0) marcher (1.2) dans (0.8) la gare, (1.5) le-
	(0.8) euh
	(0.8)
MB:	mmm?
	(1.8)
2/3:	(de-) (0.4) le u:m:
	(2.0)
MB:	jardin.
2/3:	<jardin.>
MB:	oui.
	(3.2)
2/3:	il y a des (0.5) fleurs, (7.3) et une soleil.
MB:	mhmm bie:n.
	(1.8)
2/3:	il y a des,
	(5.7)
MB:	lapins?
	(1.6)
2/3:	lapi:ns, (3.7) qui
	(13.5)
MB:	tu veux dire jouent? jouent?
	(0.4)

2/3:	[oui]
MB:	[ils] courent?
2/3:	ils- (1.7) j- jouent

None of the children in Clyne's study were any more advanced than what we have called emergent Stage 4, however many of the Camberwell children could be classified as being in Advanced Stage 4. Here the matrix language is French, with an awareness of the conventions of narrative genre. However, the production is still not native-like, except in the area of pronunciation, and contains many of the developmental errors I shall discuss later, such as lack of agreement of gender, use of English word order, and the pseudo progressive. Here are some example utterances:

Advanced stage 4

- Il a le dinaire [French pronunciation] avec le petit clown.
- Le petite garçon et le petite personne fait un tour avec des blocs.

NB: All are Year 2 students.

These extracts from two of the story telling sessions illustrate even more clearly that here we have children who are telling a story in French:

Extract 8

MB:	alors qu'est-ce que tu vois.
	(1.2)
2/2:	<je vois une petit garçon,>=
MB:	=>oui<=
2/2:	=et il marche (5.2) >il marche< da:ns (0.3) <u:ne jardin>.
MB:	bie:n c'est ça. pourquoi tu penses que c'est un jardin?
	(1.2)
2/2:	parce que il a:- (.) des fleurs.=
MB:	=il y a des fleurs. .hh e:t qu'est-ce- quel temps fail-il? tu penses.
	(2.0)
2/2:	°beau.°
MB:	mm. pourquoi?
	(0.6)
2/2:	.hh parce que le solei:l e::st (0.6) beau.
MB:	((laughs)) d'(h)acco(h)rd, c'est ça, .hh ou(h)i::, c'est ça. et là:, qu'est-ce- qu'est-ce que tu vois?
	(1.2)
2/2:	i:l:- (0.2) toujours marche dans le jardin et (0.9) .hh i:l: (0.5) des (1.8) lapins?

MB:	oui:,
	(3.0)
2/2:	aussi.

Extract 9

2/5:	um (.) <le petit garçon> (1.6) um (2.3) a:h (2.0) um
	(5.8)
MC:	prend?
	(0.8)
2/5:	mm. ( ) prend .hh <le: (0.7) clown et hh .hh (0.7) marcher (0.6) dans (1.0) le maison,>
MC:	oui::, bon, jusqu'à la mai:so:n. c'est une jolie maison. et *qu'est*-ce qu'ils font *dans* la maison.
	(0.3)
2/5:	et le petite c- clown ((Eng pron)) hh met une (1.8) gra:nde (1.0) building
MC:	oui::
2/5:	avec (.) des blocs.=

Child 2/6 was the most advanced of the children we interviewed, and could perhaps be classified as Stage 5, for which we do not yet have an operational definition:

Extract 10

2/6:	le petite garçon marche (1.2) u:m (1.5) deva:nt (0.6) les fleu:rs, (0.5) jaunes.
JW:	°mhmm°
2/6:	et le solei:l (.) est très, très beau.
JW:	„d'acco:rd„
	(4.0) ((turns page))
2/6:	le petite garçon voit (.) des lapins (1.7) cour- (0.6) courir (1.6) u:m (4.6) couri:r (.) quelque part.
JW:	((turning page)) „d'accord„
	(3.0)
2/6:	le petite garçon .hh voit quel*qu'un* qui est- qui est pleurer.
	(0.7)
JW:	„d'accord„ °°oui::°°. ((turns page))
2/6:	le petite garçon *pre:nd* (.) le petite .hh (1.8) personne (0.8) à la maison.
	(0.3)
JW:	°d'acco:rd,° °°c'est bien, c'est très bien.°°
	(2.3)
2/6:	le petite garçon et le petite personne, (1.7) met- .hh (0.6) fait u:n (2.8) tou:r,
JW:	( )

2/6: avec des blocs.=

Developmental errors in French - First three years

Two areas in the grammatical development of the children in the first three years are worth noting: the verb system and gender. A number of recent studies on the French language development of immersion students in Canada (for example, Duchesne 1995, Harley & Swain 1984) report the same kinds of 'interlanguage' (learner language which represents the learner's grammar at a particular point in time in the acquisition of the second language— see Selinker 1972, Selinker, Swain & Dumas 1976) that we have found among the Camberwell students. For example, regarding the verb system, Harley & Swain (1984) report that immersion students in early grades use a pseudo-French progressive, although by the later grades this construction has disappeared. (An example of the progressive form in English is 'I am VERB-ing'). This use of a pseudo-progressive form is also well documented in primary school bilingual programs in other languages (for a German example, see Clyne 1986). At Camberwell, several Year 1 and 2 children used some form of this progressive tense, usually with the auxiliary verb in French, followed by either the infinitive in French or an English *-ing* form:

Example 1

- Le femme est regarder un / une petit gnome (Year 1)
- Le clown est playing with the blocks (Year 1)
- Un bonhomme est marcher / sur les fleurs (Year 2)
- Une personne is marcher dans le footpath (Year 2)

There were also examples of the infinitive used instead of the present tense by children from Prep onwards. This is again well documented in Canadian studies: in his study of two total immersion schools in Winnipeg, Duchesne (1995:522), for example, notes that this incorrect use of the infinitive is more frequent among children in the early grades (Grades 1–4) than the later grades (Grades 5–6). Examples from the Camberwell children include:

Example 2

- ils manger / une petite personne marcher (Prep)

- il porter le / le clown à / sa maison (Year 1)
- ils dormir (Year 2)

One could think, on hearing this form, that the child is attempting to produce the past tense form, the imparfait "il marchait", except for the number of uses of courir/dormir etc used by the same children in similar contexts.

By Year 2, a good number of students knew the correct—oral—forms of the present tense:

Example 3

- il voit, il marche, il entend, le garçon prend.

However, the Year 2 children still showed some hesitation about number, using the singular form of the verb (fait) rather than the plural (font).

Example 4:

- Le petit garçon et le petite personne fait un tour avec des blocs.

This is to be expected, given that in many cases the children would hear no distinction between a singular and a plural third person in French:, for example:

Example 5:

il joue / ils jouent, il brosse / ils brossent, il mange / ils mangent, il marche / ils marchent.

In Duchesne's study, errors in the conjugation of verbs, especially number or person, increased from Years 1 to 2, and thereafter remained fairly stable up to Year 6. His results and ours show that this area of language development remains a potential source of difficulty for immersion students.

The second problematic area of French language development concerns gender agreement, in particular, with articles and adjectives, as can be seen in the examples above. Gender agreement causes problems not only for younger students, but for the older children as well. Unfortunately, time does not permit a discussion of the results from the oder children today. Students tended to favour the masculine article *le* regardless of the gender of the noun. Other students did not in fact distinguish between the masculine form *le* and the feminine form *la* at all, producing something between the two. This area is a common source of difficulty for learners of French generally, not only for early immersion students. In his study, Duchesne (1995) shows that errors in agreement of articles were actually less frequent in Grade 1, but increased or remained relatively stable up to Grade 5, to finally become less frequent in Grade 6.

English narrative development

Melissa's thesis is still being completed, but I can share with you some of her results. In English narration, Melissa Hiam divided the children into a "Francophone" group and an "Anglophone" group for her analyses. The children sampled were:

Francophone	Anglophone
Prep	
boy 1	boy 1
girl 1	girl 1
girl 2	
girl 3	
girl 4	
Year 1	
boy 1	boy 1
girl 1	girl 1 (our P/5)
Year 2	
boy 1	boy 1
girl 1	boy 2
girl 2 (our 1/1)	girl 1
	girl 2
3 boys, 7 girls	4 boys, 4 girls

None of the children in the "Francophone" group, however, were exclusively Francophone, with most having only one French speaking parent, and little French being used at home. Hiam used two retell tasks which are frequently used by speech language pathologists: the "Bus story" and "Sam's surprise", which use pictures to aid the child's recall and provide numerical scores which can be compared with a norming population.

On the "Bus story", she found the group means steadily increased through the years, and the spread of scores also narrowed through the years. By Year 2, 86% of the children scored at or above the norm for information/vocabulary. For morpho-syntactic development, 57% of the Prep students were average or above, 75% of Year 1 were above age level, and 100% of the Year 2 students performed better than the norming sample. She generally found that the girls achieved scores much higher than expected for their age, while some of the boys performed 2-3 years lower than their age. The

vocabulary richness of the French group was less than that of the English group, while sentence length was similar for both groups.

For "Sam's surprise", 37% of the Anglophone group used a "true narrative", compared with only 10% of the Francophone group. She noted that 30% of the Francophone group needing prompting to tell the story, compared with only 12.5% of the Anglophone group. Melissa is currently performing a more detailed transcription of her data so we can examine the nature of this prompting.

Melissa noted that all the Anglophone children used the simple past tense to tell their stories, 80% of the Francophone group used the simple past, 10% used the present tense, and 10% used a mixture of the two. We can note developmental errors in the use of the past tense form in English in P/5 and 1/1. Both treated an irregular verb as regular - "it costed" and "he catched". In the French narrations, only one child, 2/2, was able to produce a past tense in French "Il a dit son prayer". All the other children code switched into English in order to express past time.

Speaking Australian immersion?

Roy Lyster (1987) has written in the past about "immersion" being a dialect of French spoken by immersion students. One area of errors we have found indicate to us that these children are speaking "Australian immersion", which is a different dialect from "Canadian immersion". My colleague Monique Burston originally presented these next examples at ACPI, Winnipeg, two years ago, and I feel it is timely to present them again.

As you will have realised from hearing me speak, the Australian accent differs from most North American accents in one particular feature - it is non rhotic. That is, we do not generally pronounce our "r"s.

Consequently, children are taught when learning to write in English, that an 'r' in a word makes the vowel into a "long" sound. For example:
pearl
turn
born
four

(In fact, over here I quite often have to pronounce the 'r' in order to get shop assistants to understand what I want!)

So, when the children are reading aloud or speaking in French, we find them applying the English rules, as follows:

parler [pale]	marcher [maʃe]	poutant [putã]
merci	surprise	alors

So, if the children are not used to hearing the 'r' sounded in their first language, and are taught to insert it in writing "to make the sound longer", we end up with the following orthographic errors, which, I imagine, will be errors you have not seen in your data in North America:

pertite	= petite	
cherver	= cheveux	
chere	= je	(chere vais revenir, chere 10 ans)
on per	= peut	
marchent	= marcher	
je peur	= je peux	
je suis cher Madame B.	= chez	
percher	= pêcher	
perche	= pêche	
je voir	= je vois	
et toir?	= et toi?	
je n'ai par joué	= pas	
il fait des partisseries	= pâtisseries	
sa ver dire	= ça veut dire	

Finally, I would like to share with you my personal favourite of all the stories, written by a girl in Year 5.

Dans le weekend je aller au Britania Park avec 13 fills de mon guide group. Je reste pour 2 jour et 3 nui. On a mange hamburgers, pizza et popcorn et Orange Juice pour dejeuner et pour dine on a le Salade et la pizza et pour la dessert on a Apple Crumble.

Quan dimanche a arrive je aller a la R.S.P.C.A. et je achete un chat qui et et juste 2 moi et le nom et Montey. Sa se petite pour Montey pythons flying kitty et se tre petite.

I'm sure all those of us with cats can just imagine the sort of kitten Montey was!

Conclusions

On the basis of what we have found, how transferable are our results to other programs, and what implications are there for the programs just beginning? What have we learned about the process of language learning in early partial immersion programs in Australia?

One of our original research questions related to when reading and writing in French should be introduced in the program. We have found the environment to be print rich in French and English from Prep onwards, however, the children are not formally introduced to reading in French until Year 2, the third year of the program. The rationale for this at Camberwell, as stated by one of the teachers, was that the children needed to first acquire a speaking and listening competence in French before learning to read and write.

I have always felt that this ignores the ability children bring to the French immersion classroom - that is, their ability to read and write in their first language, English. Partial immersion children do not present us with a blank slate, but have skills which can be harnessed and used to their advantage. The hypothesis at this school was that skills acquired in English would transfer to the second language. Fred Genessee mentioned earlier in this colloquium that he had found a transfer of literacy skills from the second language into English in full immersion programs. However, we believe that we have shown that in this partial immersion program the transfer is often a negative one, and that reading would be better introduced in both languages, with attention being drawn to the differences between them.

In the Camberwell classrooms, priority is given to communication of information rather than on systematic learning of the forms of the target language. However, it is becoming clear that the linguistic code of the target language does not just come "naturally" to the partial immersion learner and that it needs to be taught. Even in the full immersion classroom, Roy Lyster's research that he reported on earlier in this colloquium has shown us that negotiation of meaning is good for acquisition of content

knowledge, but not for acquisition of form. However, if the school decided to increase the amount of time given to French in the program, this would have drastic implications for staffing. At present, the French and English teachers are a team, sharing a grade between them. What would be the effect on their *esprit de corps* of reducing the time in English?

But, as Lyster, Swain and Harley have found in their research, exposure to unanalysed input leads to the production of an interlanguage that is fossilised in some of its forms. Many scholars have advocated a return to a focus on form in the language classroom, indeed there was a whole colloquium devoted to this topic at AAAL 95. We can only recommend that this trend in language teaching in general and immersion in particular be considered by CPS teachers and time be set aside, on the one hand, to "focus on form" and on the other, to work a little more with written French.

[Postscript - these recommendations are currently being implemented in the Grade 3 classroom].

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APPENDIX

	P/1 f	P/2 f	P/3 f	P/4 m	P/5 f
Picture 1	Garçon	Flowers. Un garçon	Frère	A person	Garçon. He's walking in the garden.
	Soleil	He's walking.	Le soleil	Une soleil	The sun - Soleil
	Fleurs		Le fleur. Sept	Flowers.	Six fleurs
			Passe	Sept.	
Picture 2	Fleurs. Des pins.	Rabbits. Trois	Un- trois lapins,	Rabbits. Trois. Walking.	Trois lapins,
			Sept- cinq fleurs		Gris
Picture 3	Clown (Fr). A tear.	Garçon.	C'est un autre petit garçon. -> est triste.	A little boy crying. Orange.	A person crying.
Picture 4	Taking it into it's house. Maison	He's carrying him.	Avec le autre petit garçon triste. Un maison	Picking up the little boy. Une maison. Un rectangle. A square.	La He's taking him into his home. Maison, là
Picture 5	Blocks.Bleu, rouge et vert		Bleu, rouge et vert et jaune	Making houses.	
Picture 6	A fork.	A manger	Ils manger	Feeding the little boy.	A manger
Picture 8		Il pleut			They're going to bed. They're brushing their teeth.
Picture 10	Un clown. Asleep.	Sleeping.			Dormir

	P/6 m	P/7 m	P/8 f	P/9 f	
picture 1	One day - garçon	Petit - garçon. Rouge.	-> Un petit garçon	Une personne marcher. Une petite personne marcher.	
	Fleurs. Jaune. Vert. It's the sun.	(un) flower. Huit. Un soleil.	Un soleil. Fleurs.	Sept fleurs. Le soleil.	
picture 2	Un pin. Trois. Bleu.	Trois. He's walking.	Lapin. trois. Walking.	Trois pins. _. ils marchent.	
picture 3	Clown (Eng). Cry.	Triste	Un clown. He's crying.	C'est pas marcher. Un petit personne qui pleure.	
picture 4	picks him up. flower. door.	Le petit garçon - the little boy - a house	They're going back to his house. La maison.	-> il porte - à la maison. C'est une fleur.	
picture 5	tower		They're playing with blocks.	He gets the blocks out.	
picture 6	(Making) their dinner			Ils manger leur (xx)	
picture 10	Sleeping.			(c'est) dort.	

	Year 1/1 f F	Year 1/2 f	Year 1/3 m	Year 1/4 f
Picture 1	Une fille qui marche <> dans le jardin. Des fleurs. Huit	Un (arby). person. -> Garçon. Fleurs. Walking.	A boy's walking down the path with - and it's morning? And um - there are some um - and she's looking at the flowers.	Un person - et des- des fleurs.
	Il fait beau. Un soleil		The sun. Sept (fleurs)	Et un soleil. fait beau. Marcher.
Picture 2	Des lapins <> et des fleurs. Un deux trois quatre cinq six. Il marche	Lapins. Trois. Walking.	He saw some rabbits on the way.<> (while he was walking)	Des lapins. trois. Qui marche.
Picture 3	Et la fille. Et un - an elf. Triste. Parce que il pleure	Gnome. Non. Crying.	She's walking along and she sees a little (x) crying. A boy.	La ... un clown -> clown qui pleure.
Picture 4	Je - vois - le fille. Il porter le -> le clown à - sa maison	The - garçon - carrying the little man to his house. Une maison.	Brings him home. Maison. One of the flowers.	Le personne est - the person has picked up the clown. Dans la maison. Un fleur?
Picture 5	ils - jouer	The boy brings the blocks and sets them up.	They're builing - he's building things out of ... blocks. Rouge, orange, verte.	Let the- le clown joue avec le - briques.
Picture 6	ils manger	They're eating./	He's making something to eat. And they've set the table.	Make something for the clown to eat.
Picture 10				Le- la personne et la clown - c'est à snore - the person and the clown are sleeping.

	Year 1/5 m	Year 1/6 f	Year 1/7 f
Picture 1	Garçon. In a park. .	un - garçon. Dans le jardin.	(femme) - a man. Alking - in - le jardin.
	Des fleurs. Et une soleil. Beau.	Beau. Soleil. Fleurs.	le fleur. et le soliel.
Picture 2	Des lapins.		Le femm regarde le lapin. trois.
Picture 3	Un gnome. Il pleure (il pleut?	a wizard.	Le femme est regarder un - une petit gnome. Crying. Pleuver.
Picture 4	Le petit garçon - est - he picked him up. Dans le maison.	Le - garçon - et le personne - sa mais	took him to his home. Maison. door. Porte. The window.
Picture 5	C'est - il - he's building a castle.	blocs	Le clown est plaing with the blocks
Picture 6		He's making something - eat	Le femme est cooking - some food. Déjourner
Picture 10		in bed	Le femme et le petite - gnome - asleep. Dormer.

	2/1 f	2/2 f	2/3 f	2/4 m
Picture 1	un bonhomme - est marcher - sur le fleurs - on le summeur's - day	Je vois un petit garçon et il marche ... dans une jardin.	Un jour un petit homme va marcher dans la garden.	une personne est marche dans le - garden
	le sun. oui	Parce que il a des fleurs. beau. parce que le soleil est beau	Il ya des fleurs et une soleil.	
Picture 2	le- trois lapins - c'est courir - after - le bonhomme	Il toujours marche dans le jardin et il des lapins aussi	il y a des -> lapins qui -> ils jouent	see -> il voit trois lapins
Picture 3	le bonhomme - marcher - then stopped. -> il s'arrete. Il voit un - petit bonhomme	Il voit- il toujours marche dans le jardin et voit une petit clown à pleurer.	le petit homme- -> il entend quelque chose. Il - une petite homme qui pleure	Il voit un petit gnome
Picture 4	so he putter le petit bonhomme et he went to his little - petit -> maison	Il pick the clown up -> il prend et il marche à le maison	il picked up le petit homme to la maison	il voit le gnome et il marche to the -> maison
Picture 5	he - mette - le petit - bonhomme - acheter - le cubes	Et le petit clown est jouer avec le petit garçon	Ils jouent de building	build -> construisent un tower
Picture 6	et acheter - le bon banane, le pomme et le orange	Il se met- le petit garçon il se mette à cooking. Et il a le dinaire avec le petit clown	ils made -> ils font leur dinner	sit - c'est la table
Picture 7		il a dit son prayers	ils	
Picture 8	et fatigué. Et acheter un - shower	et il, le petit garçon a taking a shower	ils had a shower	
Pitcture 9	et brosh	le petit clown et le petit garçon brossent les dents	il brosh des dents	
Picture 10	et went to un sleep. dort	il va, il se mette à snoring	ils go to bed ;cent	il - sleep

	2/5 f	2/6 f	2/7 m	2/8 m
Picture 1	il y a un garçon marcher la- le parc	Le petite garçon marche devant les fleurs et le soleil est très très beau	Un garçon est marcher.	Une personne is marcher dans le footpath.
	fleurs, jaune, -> il fait beau		Il regarde les fleurs et le soleil.	des fleurs et le silieil
Picture 2	dans le parc there is le -> lapins	Le petite garçon voit des lapins courir quelque part	Les lapins est derrière le garçon.	et les lapins, et des fleurs, et une personne marcher sur la -> trottoir
Picture 3	et also dans le parc (est) un petite clown. un petit clown qui a très sad	le petite garçon voit quelqu'un qui est pleurer	Le garçon voit un clown qui pleurer	une personne sitting -> est assis
Picture 4	le petit garçon -> prend le clown et marcher dans le maison	le petite garçon prend le petite personne à la maison	Le garçon prend le clown à ta maison.	le personne pick -> prend le petit frère et le personne marche to -> à ton maison
Picture 5	et le petite clown met une grande building avec des blocs	le petite garçon et le petite personne fait un tour avec des blocs	Il jouer avec des blocs.	et le personne a le bloc et le petit frère build avec le bloc.
Picture 6	et le petit garçon make quelque chose dans un bowl. et le clown et le petit garcon have dinner	le petite garçon et le petite personne mangent quelque chose	Après ils mangent.	le personne a une plate -> une assiette pour la table
Picture 7	et il wipe les mains			
Picture 8	le petit clown sat on une grande chaire et le petit garçon et avez une shower	le petite garçon is having a shower	le garçon a une -	le personne a une shower -> une douche
Picture 9	et le petit garçon et le clown a une brossing -> brossent les teeth	il brosse la dent	ils aller	le petit frère et le personne are - ils dorment
Picture 10	et ils sleep -> ils dorment dans une grande bed	il dormir		

	2/9 f	2/10 m
Picture 1	il y a une personne et il est très beau ... garden -> jardin	une jour une petit homme il a dans une grande flower bed -> jardin
	et le soleil est chaud	avec le soleil
Picture 2	Il y a trois lapins dans le jardin, et le personne voit le trois lapins	Et dans la jardin il a trois lapins
Picture 3	Le personne voit une petite personne dans le jardin qui pleurer	et le petit homme sees -> voit une autre petit homme qui pleure
Picture 4	le personne attrappe le petit personne et - dans la maison	et le big petit homme qui pas pleure porter le petit qui pleure en ta maison
Picture 5	dans la masion la personne a des blocs pour la petit personne	le petit homme et le grand homme et le petit homme - play -> jouent avec des carrés, rectangles et triangles
Picture 6	le personne ... make -> fait le mager	ils mangent
Picture 7		
Picture 8	il metter le personne. went for the shower	il -
Picture 9	la personne et le petit personne -> brosse les	et après il brosse les dents
Picture 10	il aller	il dormer